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ABSTRACT

Presented is the second report of the North Carolina Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth which examines problems of state agency programs for handicapped and normal children. Copies of letters sent with the report to various state officials and the governor are provided. Listed are names of commission members, commission staff, and advisory review panel members. Noted are commission objectives to make recommendations for more effective programs and the long-range importance of the observed problems. Problems of state agency coordination are reported in the areas of planning, screening, genetic counseling, special education, and personnel. Program gaps are seen in areas such as student rights and responsibilities, school exclusions, home-based programs, accident prevention, and use of private resources. Mentioned among issues of concern to the commission are use of corporal punishment and rights of juveniles. Major recommendations are concerned with problems such as the lack of coordination on common program operations by departments and agencies; the lack of a common format among departments and agencies for budget, program planning, and objectives; and the failure to provide certain needed services and programs. (DB)

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June, 1973

Second Report
Governor's Advocacy Commission On Children and Youth
State of North Carolina

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Secretary David Flaherty of Human Resources greets a new friend.

John B. Chase, Jr., Chairman
Office of Child and Youth Advocacy

William L. Bondurant, Secretary
Department of Administration

We Speak For Children...

Editorial Counsel, Lee Ross

EC 060 636

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNOR'S ADVOCACY COMMISSION
ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

RALEIGH 27605

JAMES E. HOLSHOUSER, JR.
GOVERNOR
WILLIAM L. BONDURANT
SECRETARY

DR. JOHN B. CHASE
CHAIRMAN
DR. JAMES R. TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June, 1973

The Honorable James E. Holshouser
Governor of North Carolina
State Capitol Building
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Governor Holshouser:

As required by the 1971 General Assembly House Bill 203, 110-66, the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth has been made responsible for reviewing, evaluating, and reporting to the Governor and the North Carolina General Assembly on the administration of programs of State departments and component agencies serving children and youth.

During the past several months, the Commission, working together with the agencies, has reviewed programs and budgets involving all aspects of proposed services for children and youth. As a result of its studies, the Commission has been able to offer guidance and assistance to the agencies involved. Considering the increase in state population, new and more complex program needs, and the developments and breakthroughs in science – all in the service of children – the Commission, despite its relatively brief period of existence, has become very much aware and appreciative of the overwhelming problems State agencies have had to cope with.

The Commission is pleased to advise that the several State departments and component agencies which relate to the Governor's Advocacy Commission have been highly responsive to its mandate and the tasks that the Governor's Advocacy Commission has assumed. Reflecting their responsiveness and support are the following excerpts from letters received by the Commission:

Department of Public Instruction

"I see some very strong possibilities for the first time of coordinating programs that are of common interest to several major agencies in the State. This coordination of efforts will not only eliminate duplication of activities but will also save money in the long run. Moreover, there should be more efficiency in the implementation of programs that have been properly coordinated."

Department of Public Health

"... The Governor's Advocacy Commission has demonstrated its value by accomplishing an in-depth review of children's programs. The Commission and its staff offer to the State the capability of in-depth analysis of needs of children as well as a channeled formal review process for the development of programs to meet those needs. With these conditions in mind I support the Commission's budget request for continued funding. The cost of this Commission will be returned to the State many fold due to elimination of duplicate planning, overlap of services, and bringing about a more effective coordination of existing programs."

Department of Mental Health

"Your agency's purpose and intent of carrying out the responsibility for better planning and more effective coordination among public and private agencies serving children and youth in North Carolina is an essential one. If you are to improve programs, help avoid duplication, overlapping, and fragmentation of services to children and youth, provide for unmet needs, and improve delivery of services, you have a tremendous task ..."

Department of Social Rehabilitation and Control

"We realize the difficulty the Commission has encountered in developing an effective program with the limited funds available during the past two years. You are to be commended for the groundwork you have laid and the progress made within the limitations of your current budget."

The First Report prepared by the Commission was presented to you, and to former Governor Robert Scott, and the North Carolina General Assembly on December 20, 1972. The First Report was prepared because of the urgent need to fulfill the State's commitment to assess State agency programs, and to clarify information for the funding of certain programs. In this Second Report, the Commission presents a number of major recommendations and a variety of observations about planning, programming, and evaluation. Recommendations are based on in-depth studies made by a distinguished group of eight widely known experts who have served the Commission as its Advisory Review Panel. Several of these recommendations are of such importance that the Commission wished to call them to your immediate attention in this letter of transmittal, since the activities to correct the deficiencies described will need your support, as well as that of the legislature and the agencies concerned. They are as follows:

The Honorable James E. Holshouser

1. There is clear evidence of lack of coordination on common program operations by departments and agencies,
2. There is clear evidence that the departments and the agencies lack a common format for budget, program planning, and objectives,
3. Important services and programs for children are being overlooked in proposed programs.

Sincerely yours,

John B. Chase Jr.

John B. Chase, Jr.
Chairman

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNOR'S ADVOCACY COMMISSION
ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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GOVERNOR
WILLIAM L. BONDURANT
SECRETARY

DR. JOHN B. CHASE
CHAIRMAN
DR. JAMES R. TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June, 1973

Honorable James B. Hunt, Jr.
President of the Senate
Legislative Building
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. President:

I hereby transmit the Second Report of the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth as required under House Bill 203, 110-66. Pursuant to the provisions of the Act, the Commission is responsible for the review of State programs for children and youth and for coordinating existing and proposed services.

The Commission was established during the 1971 General Assembly and organized in the Spring of 1972. During the relatively brief period of its existence, it has developed this Second Report which analyzes the State programs for children and youth and reports on the progress and problems of the agencies concerned with children and youth.

Sincerely,

John B. Chase Jr.

John B. Chase, Jr.
Chairman

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DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

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SECRETARY

DR. JOHN B. CHASE
CHAIRMAN
DR. JAMES R. TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June, 1973

Honorable David Flaherty
Secretary of Human Resources
112 West Lane
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Flaherty:

House Bill 203, 110-66 of the 1971 General Assembly requires that the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth review the administration, development, and implementation of all State agency children and youth programs with regard to achieving more effective coordination and provide a report on its activities to the Governor and the legislature.

I am pleased to submit the Commission's Second Report. In this Report the Commission has analyzed and evaluated the problems inherent in planning and program coordination by the various agencies in the areas of their responsibility. The Commission is hopeful that the Report will contribute the impetus to make more effective and coordinated services available for children and youth.

Sincerely,

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CHAIRMAN
DR. JAMES R. TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June, 1973

Honorable William Bondurant
Secretary, Department of Administration
116 West Jones
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Bondurant:

House Bill 203, 110-66 of the 1971 General Assembly requires that the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth review the administration, development, and implementation of all State agency children and youth programs with regard to achieving more effective coordination and provide a report on its activities to the Governor and the legislature.

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DR. JOHN B. CHASE
CHAIRMAN
DR. JAMES R. TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June, 1973

Honorable Craig Phillips
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Education Building
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Phillips:

House Bill 203, 110-66 of the 1971 General Assembly requires that the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth review the administration, development, and implementation of all State agency children and youth programs with regard to achieving more effective coordination and provide a report on its activities to the Governor and the legislature.

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DR. JOHN B. CHASE
CHAIRMAN
DR. JAMES R. TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June, 1973

Honorable David Jones
Secretary of Social Rehabilitation and Control
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Jones:

House Bill 203, 110-66 of the 1971 General Assembly requires that the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth review the administration, development, and implementation of all State agency children and youth programs with regard to achieving more effective coordination and provide a report on its activities to the Governor and the legislature.

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DR. JOHN B. CHASE
CHAIRMAN
DR. JAMES R. TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June, 1973

Honorable James E. Ramsey
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Legislative Building
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I hereby transmit the Second Report of the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth as required under House Bill 203-110-66. Pursuant to the provisions of the Act, the Commission is responsible for the review of State programs for children and youth and for coordinating existing and proposed services.

The Commission was established during the 1971 General Assembly and organized in the Spring of 1972. During the relatively brief period of its existence, it has developed this Second Report which analyzes the State programs for children and youth and reports on the progress and problems of the agencies concerned with children and youth.

Sincerely,

John B. Chase Jr.

John B. Chase, Jr.
Chairman

x

Courtesy of Warren Uzzle and the Raleigh News and Observer

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We Speak For Children . . .

There are three identifiable historical states that mark society's approach to the child who is seen as deviant physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually.

The first stage was direct rejection of the child; this was sometimes done by actual destruction or by physical desertion. The second stage was benevolent isolation from society. This phase was marked by the construction of massive institutions built far from cities and towns, where the child often lived out a life of quiet, but non-productive dependency. The third stage is the rescue of such children from oblivion and their restoration as part of our national human resources to create new and productive contributors as part of society – not apart from society. It is this stage with which the Commission is presently concerned.

In conformance with its legislative mandate, the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth prepared and submitted on December 18, 1972, its First Report, which essentially provided the Governor and the legislature with a preliminary assessment of state agency programs and information about the funding of certain programs. Since the issuance of its First Report, the Commission has conducted continuing reviews of the agencies for the purpose of coordinating existing and new programs for children and youth. As a result of this review, on April 12th, 1973, the Commission submitted its subsequent review entitled "Follow-up Recommendations to the First Budget Report of the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth to the Governor and General Assembly."

In pursuing its obligations, the Commission brought together a group of distinguished leaders from North Carolina to serve as an Advisory Review Panel. These experts are active in the areas of planning and evaluation and the administration of children's programs. The eight members of the Advisory Review Panel came from varied fields, including clinical psychology, social work, regular and special education, delinquency, child development, pediatric medicine and law. A list of the members of the Advisory Review Panel may be found on page xiii. The Panel worked with the Commission in making an in-depth analysis of the State-supported programs for children and youth and helped in the preparation of recommendations to the Governor and legislature for future constructive activities.

In reviewing the various agency programs the Commission's objectives were to:

1. Determine how the State of North Carolina departments and their component agencies identify and adopt priorities for programs to serve children and youth.
2. Identify areas of importance for children and youth programs that were overlooked in program proposals submitted by State departments and their component agencies.
3. Provide recommendations so that better programs for children and youth can be planned by State departments and their component agencies.
4. Provide recommendations for a more effective review of the programs of departments and their component agencies on a regular and continuing basis.

In studying the State-proposed programs and budgets dealing with children and youth the Commission was impressed by the variety of programs that are already in existence for children and youth in North Carolina and the wide range of problems the agencies are attempting to solve with limited resources.

Few of the problems of the agencies could be identified by the Commission as momentary, or of a character that called for a single treatment which would provide an instant cure. The problems the agencies are attempting to grapple with will have long-range impact on the State of North Carolina. These problems extend back into the past and stretch into the future. Therefore, careful planning and coordinated effort are not only desireable, but crucial.

In reviewing agency program presentations the Commission found that agency budget requests for funds from the General Assembly lacked the necessary information to allow for sound decision-making on program requests. There was a lack of uniformity in format and in presentation from one agency to the next.

As a result, it was virtually impossible to make comparisons across different agency programs in terms of what they were doing and what their objectives might be.

Agencies and State legislature subcommittees are organized by professional areas such as social service, health, or education, which creates an administrative problem of coordination since the problems of the children appear in a multitude of areas which cut across agency and legislative professional lines. For example, a child who is mentally retarded may come to the attention of health agencies for initial diagnosis; to social service agencies for parent counseling; to education and rehabilitation agencies for training; and to mental health agencies for a wide range of potential services. Despite the multiple contacts of a child, the long-range programs of these agencies do not dovetail with one another, nor do they show evidence of coordination in planning to respond with a total program for the betterment of the individual child.

Some specific examples are identified on the following pages.

Governor Holshouser chats with deaf children.

Problems of State Agency Coordination

1. Planning

Some State agencies have requested establishment of a variety of residential settings for various problem groups of children and youth without tying in with other agencies. For example, social rehabilitation and mental health agencies are considering the development of programs for halfway houses, sheltered workshops, and group homes. However, there was no procedure to coordinate the planning which would identify the problem areas, the existing public and private resources available, or the proposed location of the facilities.

2. Screening

Suggestions for various screening programs to identify disabilities in children have been made by individual agencies. For example, a $191,000 biennium request for a vision screening program was suggested by the State Commission for the Blind without the knowledge of, or integration with, the Department of Public Health Screening program, which included vision screening.

3. Genetic Counseling

State agencies are requesting a variety of genetic counseling efforts for early metabolic screening, diabetes, etc. This type of program is intended to provide an alert to identify handicapping conditions in babies so that appropriate corrective intervention can be made available. There is a great need for a central State genetic counseling service, rather than setting up a separate program for specific disorders in different agencies.

4. Special Education

Responsibility for speech and hearing and crippled children's programs appears to be fragmented between the Departments of Public Health, Mental Health, Social Services, Public Instruction, and the Schools for the Deaf. The Wright School program in the Department of Mental Health is a major educational demonstration program for emotionally disturbed children. However, there seems to be no apparent relationship between The Wright School Mental Health program and the growing program for the education of emotionally disturbed children which comes within the purview of the Department of Public Instruction.

5. Personnel

In the area of new personnel, there seems to be a lack of clarity with regard to the functions of some personnel. For example, the Department of Public Health requested the services of "nurse-practitioners" while the Department of Public Instruction requested "health educators" to perform the same kind of function. These are two different kinds of personnel. A review should be made of job functions in order that individuals with specialized skills will be installed in the right jobs. This will require personnel policy coordination by the agencies in order to achieve consistency in job descriptions and in the selection of new employees.

The children we serve require all of the services and resources which other children require, plus some additional services. All children need adequate health supervision and appropriate nutrition; an environment conducive to reasonable mental health and a family which sets standards and patterns for the development of values; an adequate education and an opportunity to develop which will provide them with adequate resources to help them become independent adults.

Services for these children can be classified into two broad categories: those that are provided by society, but which do not depend on the child for success, and those services which require the child's participation and which must take the particular handicap into consideration.

One of the consequences of limited coordination is that in the agency by agency formulation of programs, some significant gaps exist. Some children may not be able to receive appropriate attention or services, while others may have duplication of services available.

Utilizing the agency program plans the Commission identified several gaps to serve as illustrations. The observations that follow do not necessarily reflect a comprehensive portrait of the full range of program oversights that might be identified if a more extensive review were made.

Program Gaps

1. Student Rights and Responsibilities

There is a lack of attention to the issue of rights and responsibilities of students. For example, one of the major issues currently facing programs for children and youth throughout the nation involves the legal right of all students to benefit from programs, whether they involve education, rehabilitation or health. The recent trend of court litigation has manifested a growing public awareness and concern with the right of children and youth to benefit from appropriate intefvention programs. In the review of accumulated agency program statements, no specific recognition of this increasingly important issue was indicated.

2. School Exclusions

a. Assistance to Pregnant Teenagers

The Board of Public Health reported that during 1972 there were 22,555 cases of teenage pregnancy in North Carolina and that *unwed* pregnant teenagers accounted for 11% of the births last year. The significant number of teenagers involved in early pregnancy will doubtless have dire consequences on our society. Agency planning documents do not reveal any concern with this issue. This situation could be corrected by the issuance of a specific guideline statement. The guideline would be particularly effective in the field of education, if it stated that it is the expectation of the State that these teenagers are entitled to schooling as are other students.

b. Assistance to Juvenile Delinquents

There is no indication in the program plans that have been formulated by the Department of Public Instruction or the Department of Youth Development to gradually reintroduce delinquent children into public schools. The Commission has received information that in several instances children have been denied readmission to public schools due to their record of previous delinquent behavior.

c. Assistance to Handicapped Children

There was no evidence in agency budget requests of planning for comprehensive programs to provide all handicapped children with an adequate and equal public school education. Cases in which handicapped children have been excluded from public schools have been reported to the Commission.

3. Home-based Programs In Child Development

A recently established, but apparently viable strategy, in dealing with early problems of children has been the development of the new Homestart program which has been brought into the home and calls for direct parent assistance. Instead of a child attending a central day care or child development program, field specialists make home visits and help the parents with their individual problems of bringing up the child. There is no indication that any agency had plans to demonstrate the effectiveness of this home program.

4. Safety-Proofing the Home for Children

Another important issue concerning the Commission is the development of a program to prevent accidents to children in the home as well as outside the home. It has been estimated that, on an annual basis approximately 700,000 youngsters suffer injuries from toys alone. These and many other kinds of accidents lead to permanent impairment. This program involves Federal government and consumer-based efforts to ensure that toys and clothing are safe and that containers for drugs are made so that children, for their own safety, cannot open them. No clear statement of purpose concerning this particular area could be found in agency program presentations.

5. Use of Private Resources

Another program alternative worthy of serious exploration is the purchase of services for child care from competent existing private services, in contrast to total reliance on the development of additional public centers to provide such services. Such services could be utilized for children who are juvenile delinquents, mentally retarded, or emotionally disturbed, or who need foster care.

In addition to the program gaps previously cited, the Commission identified the following issues of concern which should be carefully considered by State agencies responsible for children and youth programs.

Issues of Concern to The Child Advocacy Commission

1. At present, the use of corporal punishment is an accepted practice within North Carolina's public school system. The Commission urges a careful re-examination of statutory policies in an effort to assess alternatives to the use of corporal punishment and eliminate such abusive practices.

2. A related issue is the use and reported abuse of corporal punishment within the institutions for juvenile delinquent youths. The Commission recommends eliminating the use of physical punishment in juvenile-correctional institutions.

3. Under North Carolina law, juveniles can be incarcerated for several acts which are not criminal offenses if committed by adults. One such act, truancy from school, accounts for approximately one-half of the youths presently in the state's eight juvenile-correctional homes. The Commission recommends that truancy and related offenses specified as "ungovernable behavior" be removed from the statutes, and that state agencies explore alternative means of dealing with such youths.

4. State agency policies related to the use of quiet rooms (rooms utilized in several institutions for calming troublesome children and locking up difficult children) and the use of shock treatment should be more carefully controlled and re-examined. The Commission is of the opinion that these methods of dealing with difficult children are abused and have achieved only minimal success in the re-education and rehabilitation of disturbed children.

5. The Commission feels that policies and practices which are detrimental to the health and welfare of children and youth served by state agencies are ultimately controlled by the Commissioners of the various departments. Therefore, the Commission urges the Commissioners to offer leadership in actively eliminating the harmful practices and policies that now exist. The Commissioners are urged to utilize the Governor's Child Advocacy Commission for support in this endeavor.

As a result of its intensive review, the Commission offers the following recommendations which are designed to increase the productivity and impact of State agency programs as well as that of the Commission. The recommendations are in the form of questions, and provide the rationale to improve programming. To achieve better coordination and communication, the Commission also recommends the establishment of a standard planning and budget format to be used for state agency programs. This format would require supplying information that would answer the following essential questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

Common Planning and Information Format

1. How Are Agency Priorities Determined?

In the documents provided by the agencies, priorities to be included in the budget process are listed. Few agencies offer statements that show how each priority is determined, or list the key personnel or groups who would participate in developing program priorities. This information should be provided for all programs.

2. What Are the Needs that Are Being Met by a Program?

Many of the agency plans focus only on the cost of financial resources needed to implement programs. No explanation is offered to explain the basic needs to be served by the programs. Unless there is a clear statement of need and an explanation of how much of the need would be taken care of by proposed programs, it is virtually impossible to assess the degree of fulfillment of the goal, or to determine what programs in the respective agencies might be serving similar needs. This causes an effective block toward improved coordination.

3. Who Is the Target Group To Be Benefited by a Program?

In most of the agency program statements, there is a general explanation of an implied target group. However, to provide comprehensive goals, such groups need to be more specifically identified in terms of age category and diagnostic category. In addition, such factors as geographic and economic characteristics of the local target group must be clearly identified.

4. Are There Clear Statements of Objectives and Program Strategies?

A tangible statement of attainable goals should be presented – if at all possible. At the very least, statements should show clearly what the program decision makers have in mind, so that independent observers can determine to what extent a program has reached its objective. A concise and clear statement of how the program in question will deal with the identified needs can be a very important factor in developing better coordination between agencies.

5. What Evidence Is There that Other Strategies Have Been Tries and Rejected, Or Reviewed and Rejected?

State agency proposals are not clear about particular strategies they intend to use to implement programs. No explanation is made about strategies to indicate whether they had been previously tested to determine program effectiveness. Furthermore, no recognition was given to the problem of manpower needs and special qualifications of personnel to implement statewide programs. Some evidence should be presented that various strategies and manpower questions have been considered, and that alternative programs were rejected for good reason.

6. Is There Evidence of Attempts at Coordination or Relationship to Other Programs and Agencies?

There is abundant evidence in studying the agency reports of a lack of communication and coordination between agencies dealing with similar problems or using similar strategies. This is reflected in the previously described problem areas on page 3, and needs to be corrected.

7. What Particular Agency Is the Proper Administrative Home for a Program?

Often it is self-evident that a particular agency is the logical home for certain programs. However, in other instances, it appears that perhaps a program could find a more appropriate home where it would be more

effective under the current reorganization. The agency offering a program should also evaluate it in these terms.

8. Has Provision Been Made to Measure the Effectiveness and Quality of a Program and Is the Arrangement Included in the Program?

This provision should be included in all programs and the agency should be responsible for reporting back to policymakers the development of each program. The report should also explain how this feedback will be provided. In the broadest sense, effective evaluation requires third-party evaluators who would not be subject to the criticism that the agency might be biased in favorably judging its own programs.

Four recommendations for action by the Governor's Advocacy Commission on Children and Youth follow. These are distinct from its recommendations about the State agencies. These recommendations cover the broad aspects of child advocacy which are of concern to State agencies as well as State government.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GOVERNOR'S ADVOCACY COMMISSION

1. Forums on Program Planning and Coordination

The Governor's Advocacy Commission should develop a series of forums on planning for State agency personnel. The forums would focus on solving problems of particular target groups. This activity would represent a significant step toward achieving a more systematic and coordinated State planning effort for children and youth. Such meetings could utilize noted experts who would review existing State agency planning models as the basis for generating movement into more advanced models. This procedure would help the agencies communicate more clearly what their programs are intended to accomplish and what they are achieving, and would enable them to do a better job of informing the public about the progress of their programs.

2. Legislative Coordination

Another major step forward would be made if an informal or formal legislative Committee on Children and Youth could be established in the State legislature. This Committee could then relate the respective children and youth programs and review the requests for programs across the entire State agency program spectrum. This procedure would be in addition to the traditional analysis made by relevant legislative subcommittees in the areas of health and education for children.

3. Court Action and the Child

Recognizing the impact of numerous court cases involving the rights of children, it is recommended that the Commission convene a major State conference as soon as possible on the subject of the "Courts and the Child." State agencies, as well as legal and citizen groups, should be invited to discuss the implications of these court cases for programs for children and youth, insofar as they affect North Carolina.

4. State of the Child Report

An annual report should be issued by the Governor's Advocacy Commission to inform the Governor, the legislature, and the public on the current status of programs for children and youth in the State of North Carolina. Just as we have become accustomed to an annual presentation of the economic condition of the Nation and of the State, we should have a basis of measurement which would make us aware of the progress or deterioration of programs for children and youth. In addition, individual studies of special areas affecting children will be produced by the Commission to provide a continuing series of new and constructive benchmarks.

John Chase, the Commission's Chairman, and Jim Tompkins, its Executive Director, meet with young protestors.

CONCLUSION

The recommendations and observations contained in this Second Report represent this Commission's position on the crucial issues identified with North Carolina's State-supported children's programs. It is the Commission's hope that speedy and effective responses will be generated by State agencies in support of and liaison with the Commission to plan and implement remediation of the problems contained in this document. The range of difficulties in the lives of our children should be noted in the statistics below, which make an early response to the revamping of our program structure imperative.

The report *Who Speaks for Children* (1971) published by the Study Commission on North Carolina's Emotionally Disturbed Children identifies the incidences, estimates and rates of handicapping conditions, fatalities in babies and other debilitating conditions influencing children in North Carolina.

Of a child population of 1,836,304 the infant mortality rate rises to 68.4 percent in some counties. North Carolina reports 8,000 high risk mothers of babies every year. Teenage pregnancy is reported on the rise and over the last decade has risen 400%. 35% or more high school students use drugs. The dropout rate in North Carolina high schools is on the rise. Suicide associated with depression and alienation was the third most frequent cause of death in college students in North Carolina, resulting in 38 deaths during 1968-1969. Several thousand children are reported delinquent and almost all of these children are diagnosed emotionally disturbed. State residential schools provide for 5,000 children institutions for the mentally retarded. The North Carolina Society for Autistic Children reports approximately 1,600 identified autistic children in the State. It is estimated that over 200,000 school age children are handicapped and in need of special education and treatment services.